



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE STATE'S ATTORNEY FOR HOWARD COUNTY

For Immediate Release:

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Laurel Man Sentenced in 2015 Murder of His Wife

A Laurel man, convicted of the 2015 murder of his wife, has been sentenced to a 16-year prison term. Last November Jason W. Martin, 43, entered an Alford plea to the second-degree murder of his wife, Carla Dee Martin, 42. A three day sentencing hearing was held earlier this month. Today, Howard County Circuit Court Judge Richard S. Bernhardt sentenced Martin.

At the November plea hearing prosecutors told the court that police responded to the Martin home in the 9500 block of Glen Ridge Road at 11 p.m. on October 27, 2015 after receiving a 911 call from the Martins' next-door neighbor. The neighbor reported that Jason Martin showed up at his home with his children who were ages 12, 8, and 6 at the time. The neighbor reported that Martin had blood splattered on his face and clothes and that Martin stated, "I think I killed Carla." Martin told the neighbor that he had a fight with his wife and "hit her with a dumbbell."

After calling 911 the neighbor went to the Martin residence where he discovered Carla Martin on the basement floor. She was unresponsive but had a pulse. Paramedics transported her to Laurel Regional Hospital where she was pronounced dead.

During the three-day sentencing hearing a defense expert testified that Martin was suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder arising from alleged child abuse at the hands of his father over twenty-five years ago. The prosecution expert did not agree with the defense expert witness but testified it was a rage-induced response by Martin.

During his imposition of sentencing, Judge Bernhardt noted that the defense witnesses referred to the crime as "the event" while the prosecution witnesses referred to it as "the murder." Judge Bernhardt remarked directly to the defendant that "this was murder, not manslaughter."

Though prosecutors sought a 30-year maximum prison sentence, Judge Bernhardt sentenced Martin within state sentencing guidelines to 30 years suspending all but 16 years. The judge also ordered that Martin serve five years of supervised probation upon his eventual release, and that he subject himself to mental health evaluation and treatment.

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